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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9256
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RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 6657
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#) [ELECTIONS](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS - SITREP 3

REF: ABUJA 758 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: The balloting in Nigeria's Presidential and National Assembly elections has been plagued by logistical shortcomings and voter apathy. Our observers report overall turnout throughout the nation was no more than 25 percent of registered voters. Most polls are closing, but Mission observers have been unable to witness collation activities. The security situation remains stable. INEC Chairman Maurice Iwu is congratulating himself on a job well done, but no announcement has been made about the absence of ballots for many national assembly races. Theft of ballot boxes took an upswing towards the end of the day. This is the last Embassy sitrep for today. END SUMMARY.

LOGISTICS

¶2. (U) The balloting in Nigeria's Presidential and National Assembly elections is basically finished at 1930 local time. Voter turnout was low throughout the country, with our observers reporting less than ten percent in the South South and the Southeast zones. The turnout in some places in the Southwest may approach 20 percent, although in others our observers reported less than 10 percent. Pockets of the North Central zone had turnout approaching fifty percent, but overall the turnout was probably 30 percent or less. Turnout in parts of the Northwest approached 30 percent, but in Katsina, Kano and Kaduna the turnout was likely closer to 20 percent. In the Northeast, turnout was in the same 20 to 30 percent range. Voting did not get underway in rural areas until at least 1700 (if at all) in every part of the country. Even so, many polling stations closed at 1400, claiming that since the ballots finished there was no need to remain open.

SECURITY

¶3. (U) There continue to be no serious security incidents reported anywhere in the country, but we continue to receive reports of some sporadic and isolated incidents. A curfew has been announced in Bauchi state, raising questions about how voting could continue. Since the balloting did not start until at least 1600 in many parts of the city, this could raise some tensions.

INEC STORIES

¶4. (U) Mission observers report that errors on the ballot papers have forced the postponement of some National Assembly elections in Ogun, Niger, Abia, Lagos, Oyo, Kaduna, Rivers, Jigawa, Gombe, and Delta. (Updated list of states from sitrep 2.) In most cases, the reason was omission of candidates from the ballot. INEC Chairman Maurice Iwu has been on television congratulating himself and INEC on a good performance today even though the head of the EU Observer team told the press earlier that his assessment was "outspokenly negative."

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

¶5. (U) Mission observers continue to report isolated instances of what appears to be one or another of the parties influencing the balloting in that polling unit. Reports of ballot box theft increased late in the day, but most local observers did not seem too concerned about it.

COMMENT

¶6. (U) This is the last Embassy update for the day.

¶7. (U) This message incorporates information from both Embassy and Consulate Lagos.
CAMPBELL